Fairbury, Illinois in the Civil War

by

Dale C. Maley

* * * * *

PUBLISHED BY:
Artephius Publishing

Fairbury, Illinois in the Civil War
Copyright © 2020 by Dale C. Maley

All rights reserved. Without limiting the rights under copyright reserved above, no part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in or introduced into a retrieval system. No part may be transmitted, in any form, or by any means (electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise). Exceptions to this must be with the prior written permission of both the copyright owner and the above publisher of this book.

*****

Table of Contents

Chapter 1
Fairbury Prior to the Civil War
Chapter 2
Reference Materials Searched
Chapter 3
One Hundred and Twenty-Ninth Infantry Company E
Chapter 4
3rd Cavalry Company K
Chapter 5
Fairbury People Who Gave Their Lives in Service of Their Country in the Civil War
Chapter 6
Individual Service Records of Fairbury People Who Served in the Civil War
Chapter 7
Prisoners of War
Chapter 8
Civil War Data Analysis
Chapter 9
Grand Army of the Republic
Chapter 10
Civil War Pensions
Chapter 11
Gatherings of Fairbury Area Civil War Veterans
Chapter 12
Albert Cashier
Chapter 13
Documents at the Fairbury Echoes Museum
Chapter 14
James T. Ayers
Chapter 15
A.J. Cropsey Biography
Chapter 16
Confederate Soldiers

Chapter 17
1898 List of Civil War Veterans Buried at Graceland Cemetery
Chapter 18
Summary

References
Recommended Reading
Web Sites

* * * * *

CHAPTER 6

Individual Service Records of Fairbury People Who Served in the Civil War

VIRGIN, JOHN, SGT, K, 3 IL US CAV, LIVINGSTON COUNTY, IL.

John lived in Fairbury after the war. His biography appeared in the 1878 history book.

JOHN VIRGIN, dealer in French horses, Fairbury; born in Tippecanoe Co., Ind., Aug. 10, 1838; removed to Illinois in the Fall of 1855, locating in Eppard's Point Township, this county. Served as Orderly Sergeant of Co. K, 3d Ill. Cav., from August, 1861, to August, 1864. After his return from the army, he engaged in farming in Avoca Township, removing to Fairbury, his present home, in the Spring of 1868. Owns 300 acres of land, valued at $3,000, and city property valued at $2,000. Married in the Spring of 1865 to Miss Serepta J. McDowell; she was born in Avoca Township, this county. Mr. V. is President of the Fairbury Union Agricultural Society, and has filled that position since the date of its organization. He was appointed Postmaster at Fairbury, May 17, 1878.

John Virgin also had a biography and a portrait in the 1888 history book.

JOHN VIRGIN. Remarkable strides have been made in the improvement of the quality of horses and other domestic animals in this country within the past few years, and in Livingston County may be found some of the men who have accomplished so much in this respect.

One of these gentlemen, whose name is known throughout the country, resides at Fairbury. He is engaged in importing, breeding and dealing in French draft horses, and brings to bear in his business a rare amount of enterprise and skill. To him belongs the honor of first introducing this stock of horses into Livingston County, and since those pioneer days in the development of this noble animal in this section of the .State, no man has done more and deserves higher praise than he, and in presenting his portrait, which we do in this connection, we give to our patrons the picture not only of an enterprising business man, but an estimable and worthy citizen. He takes special interest in all movements for the public good, and contributes liberally both of his time and means to every good work.

Mr. Virgin is a native of Indiana, and was born in Carroll County on the 10th of August, 1838. He is the son of Thomas and Lucinda (Girard) Virgin, who were natives of Ohio. The former was reared to manhood in that State, moved to Indiana and was there married. He was a farmer by occupation and became a citizen of Illinois, where he continued the cultivation of the soil up to the time of his death, which occurred in 1870. His widow and family of eight children are all still living.

Our subject came with his parents to Illinois in 1854, and located near Pontiac, where he worked on a farm until 1870, and during that year moved to Fairbury. In 1868 he began the breeding of French draft horses, which, as above indicated, was before anyone else had inaugurated this enterprise which has since proved to be of such vast importance, not only to the agriculturists of the country, but to the business interests of the great cities.

In 1872 he made the first importation of these horses to Livingston County, bringing at that time three splendid animals. Of late years the

purchase of these horses in France is effected through a resident party in that country, who buys the finest stock and consigns them to Mr. Virgin for sale. Since beginning the business he has shipped between 400 and 500 animals, and the sales now amount to $30,000 or $40,000 annually. When Mr. Virgin began the business he had no capital with which to operate, and the first money used was borrowed at a time when he was a farm tenant. His splendid success from such a beginning certainly indicates rare business talent.

Mr. Virgin was married, Jan. 26, 1865, to Miss Sarepta J. McDowell, of Fairbury, the ceremony being performed by Rev. John Houston, of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Mrs. Virgin was born in Livingston County April 5, 1842, and came from a pioneer family who settled in Avoca Township in 1832. The names of her parents were John and Elizabeth (Moore) McDowell, natives respectively of Ohio and Tennessee. Mr. and Mrs. Virgin have had four children: Georgie, who was born Oct. 23, 1866, and died Sept. 12, 1881; Minnie, who was born Aug. 18, 1868; Alta, Aug. 4, 1870, and Daisy, Feb. 25, 1875.

Mr. Virgin was a member of Company K, 3rd Illinois Cavalry, for three years. He entered as a private Aug. 7, 1861, and was promoted Orderly Sergeant, in which capacity he acted for nearly three years. He participated in all the heavy battles of the West, and was taken prisoner Nov. 25, 18(33, at Vermillionville, La., and was held for thirty days when he was paroled. He remained on parole seven months, during part of which time he served as Quartermaster in the parole camp, and upon being exchanged remained in this capacity until the expiration of his term of service. He was discharged Sept. 4, 1864, at Springfield. Ill.

The firm of Virgin, Brown & Co., own 400 acres of fine land in various tracts which is specially devoted to raising fine stock. Much of this land is under a fine state of cultivation. Mr. Virgin is a Republican, and takes great interest in both the National and local campaigns managed by that party. Mr. V. is and has been a member of the State Board of Agriculture for the past four years, and is now General Superintendent of the State Fair and fat stock show.

He is one of the charter members of Fairbury Post No. 75, G. A. R., and has occupied most of its posts of duty and is now Commander. He takes

great pleasure in attending State Encampments and meeting his old comrades. He and his estimable wife are members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and contribute liberally to the support and maintenance of that organization.